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WRT 105

**Chapter 11- *The Dimensions of Disability Oppression* by James Charlton**

1. “The vast majority of people with disabilities have always been poor, powerless and degraded.” Page 147
2. “There is a great deal to say about disability oppression, not only because it is complex and multifaceted but also because we have so little experience conceptualizing its phenomenology and logic.” Page 147
3. “In political-economic terms, everyday life is informed by where and how individuals, families, and communities are incorporated into a world system dominated by the few who control the means of production and force.” Page 148
4. “For example, it is readily apparent that people, even those with disabilities, living in the more economically developed regions of the world have higher “standards of living” than their counterparts in the Third World.” Page 149
5. “Thompson’s formulation is that the study of symbols as a way to interpret cultures must be done contextually, by recognizing that power relations order the experiences of everyday life in which these signs and symbols are produced, transmitted, and received: …” Page 150
6. “The point is not that one culture makes people do or think this and another that but that ideas and beliefs are informed by and in cultures and that cultures are partial expressions of a world in which the dualities of domination/ subordination, superiority/ inferiority, normality/ abnormality are relentlessly reinforced and legitimized.” Page 151
7. “Unlike these anthropologists and of course many others, my thesis is that backward attitudes about disability are not the basis for disability oppression, disability oppression is the basis for backward attitudes.” Page 151
8. “Self-pity, self-hate, shame, and other manifestations of this process are devastating for they prevent people with disabilities from knowing their real selves, their real needs, and their real capabilities and from recognizing the options they in fact have.” Page 151
9. “In his attack on traditional psychology, Sartre is saying one must step back and ponder reality (there is a “power of withdraw”) because reality has thoroughgoing impact on consciousness.” Page 152
10. “The primary method through which power relations are reproduced is not physical- military force and state coercion- but metaphysical- people’s consent to the existing power structure.” Page 153
11. “William is suggesting that the dominant classes and culture constantly and everywhere impress on people the naturalness or normality of their power and privilege.” Page 154
12. “Students with disabilities, as soon as their disability is recognized by school official, are placed on a separate track.” Page 154
13. “Special Education, like so many other reforms won by the popular struggle, has been transformed from a way to increase the probability that students with disabilities will get some kind of an education into a badge of inferiority and a rule-bound, bureaucratic process of separating and then warehousing millions of young people that the dominant culture has no need for.” Page 155
14. “People with disabilities are usually seen as sick and pitiful, and in fact many became disabled through disease and most live in pitiful conditions.” Page 156
15. “Instead of curing the social conditions that cause disease and desperation, or removing the steps that necessitate assistance, the dominant culture explains the pitiful conditions people are forced to live in by creating a stratum or group of “naturally” pitiful individuals to conceal its pitiful status quo.” Page 156
16. “They, like other oppressed peoples, are constantly told by the dominant culture what they cannot do and what their place is in society.” Page 157

(Added a few more than 10 because I liked this essay and didn’t want to leave out any of the quotes that I thought gave a powerful message!)

(Also shocked with UN report mentioned)

According to Charlton in *The Dimensions of Disability Oppression*, he explains that disabled people who experience disability oppression, is largely due to today’s cultures and societies’ belief systems and class positions, along with the power relations held by the empowered upper classes (abled-body people) that usually hold most of the world’s control.